

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application:

## **LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

Claims 1 to 13. (Canceled).

14. (Currently Amended) A method for processing at least one workpiece according to an electrochemical processing, comprising:

applying a voltage between at least one electrode and the at least one workpiece, so that, for one of a removal and a deposit of a material, a current flows between the at least one electrode and the at least one workpiece, through ~~[[the]]~~ a medium;

increasing the voltage prior to ~~for the~~ a significant processing of the at least one workpiece, the voltage then being increased via a ramp to a predefined value, at which the significant processing will then occur; and

monitoring the current.

15. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, wherein: the medium includes an electrolyte solution.

16. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, wherein the increasing includes: after the voltage attains the predefined value, increasing the voltage to a higher value via the ramp.

17. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, further comprising:

after the voltage attains the predefined value, lowering the voltage to a lower value via the ramp.

18. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, wherein: after attaining the predefined value, the voltage is one of increased to a higher value via the ramp and lowered to a lower value via the ramp in such a way that an essentially constant current characteristic is obtained.

19. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, further comprising:  
specifying a voltage characteristic during processing;  
measuring the current; and  
comparing the current to at least one predefined range formed by a lower limit value and an upper limit value.

20. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 19, further comprising:  
stopping the processing if the measured current is outside the at least one predefined range.

21. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, further comprising:  
comparing a current measured one of toward and at an end of processing to a second predefined range that is smaller than a range specified during processing.

22. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, further comprising:  
comparing the current to a specified range at an end of a test procedure; and  
stopping the processing when the specified range is one of exceeded and not attained.

23. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, wherein: the at least one workpiece includes a plurality of workpieces, and the plurality of workpieces is processed in parallel and the current through each workpiece is measured.

24. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, wherein: the at least one electrode is not moved relative to the at least one workpiece during processing.

25. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, further comprising:

comparing the current to a specified range during a test procedure.

26. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 25, further comprising:

abandoning the processing when the specified range is one of exceeded and not attained.

27. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 14, further comprising:

prior to increasing the voltage, implementing a test procedure using a test voltage.

28. (New) The method as recited in Claim 14, wherein a resistance in a gap between the at least one electrode and the at least one workpiece is within a specified range.